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The Roman Republic and the Parthian Threat of the Eastern Provinces in the Years 53—50 B.C.



One of M. Licinius Crassus's most significant goals after obtaining the second consulate in the year 55 B.C. was to strive for war achievements which could be compared to the recent successes of Cn. Pompeius or with C. Iulius Caesar's fresh victories in Gaul.¹ Similarly as in the case of Pompeius and Caesar, the method to achieve this goal was to grant a certain province with regency. Therefore, as soon as *Lex Trebonia* was passed, which gave him a five-year-long reign over Syria as well as the right to start a large-scale military campaign² and organize the necessary army, even before the above-mentioned consulate expired, in November 55 he led this army to the province he had been

¹ Already the ancients paid attention to this fact. See in this context: Vell. Pat. II, 46, 2; Plut., *Crass.* 16, 1—3; App., *B.C.* II, 18, 65; Flor. I, 46, 2; 5; Cass. Dio XL, 12, 1. Cf. also: J. Wołski: "Rok 53 przed Chrystusem. Data przełomowa w dziejach imperializmu rzymskiego." W: *W 2500-lecie powstania Republiki Rzymskiej*. Red. A. Kunisz. Katowice 1995, pp. 22—23.

² Liv., *per.* CV; Vell. Pat. II, 46, 2; Plut., *Crass.* 15, 5; Pomp. 52,3; App., *B.C.* II, 18, 65; Cass. Dio XXXIX, 33, 2. On *Lex Trebonia*: G. Niccolini: *I fasti dei tribuni della plebe*. Milano 1934, p. 309; G. Rotondi: *Leges publicae populi Romani*. Hildesheim 1962, p. 408; as well as: A.E.R. Boak: "The Extraordinary Commands from 80 to 48 B.C.: A Study in the Origins of the Principate." *AHR*, vol. 24, 1918, pp. 18—21; A. Garzetti: "M. Licinio Crasso." *Athenaeum*, vol. 19, 1941, pp. 27—28; B.A. Marshall: *Crassus. A Political Biography*. Amsterdam 1976, p. 131; A.M. Ward: *Marcus Crassus and the Late Roman Republic*. Columbia—London 1977, pp. 273—275; N. Rogosz: *Polityczna rola senatu w Republice Rzymskiej w latach 59—55*. Katowice 2004, pp. 299—302. Cf. also: A.W. Lintott: *Violence in the Republican Rome*. Oxford 1968, pp. 198, 214.

granted.³ After arriving in Syria, he immediately restarted the preparations for the war against Parthians. Thus, the beginning of his reign in this province resulted in significant changes in the Roman-Parthian relations.⁴

After getting an insight into the local relations and having the preparations finished, he crossed Euphrates straight away and, leading his army, invaded the Parthian area. However, in spite of the fact that Crassus's troops were acting on the Parthian area, the campaign of year 54 resulted neither in the laurels he expected, nor in conquests that would satisfy him.⁵ This is why, after returning to Syria, he initiated preparations for the next expedition, which he was going to carry out in year 53. Yet, this expedition finished with the Roman defeat at Carrhae on 9 June, 53, due to the fact that during the fights against Parthians Crassus's army was completely annihilated. The commander in chief and his son were killed and only few troops were saved from the rout.⁶

³ More on the topic of Crassus's expedition to Syria: Vell. Pat. II, 46, 3; Plut., *Crass.* 16, 3—6; *Pomp.* 52, 4; App., *B.C.* II, 18, 66; Flor. I, 46, 3; Cass. Dio XXXIX, 60, 4; A.D. Simpson: "The Departure of Crassus for Parthia." *TAPhA*, vol. 69, 1938, pp. 532—541; B.A. Marshall: *Crassus...*, pp. 139, 150; A.M. Ward: *Marcus Crassus...*, pp. 284—285.

⁴ On the topic of Crassus's preparations for the war against the Parthians after assuming the reign of Syria: Plut., *Crass.* 17, 2; Cass. Dio XXXIX, 60, 4; XL, 12, 1. Since Cn. Pompeius's stay in the East, during the third war against Mithradates VI, the king of Pontus, the relations between Romans and the Parthians were appropriate or even friendly: Liv., *per.* C; Plut., *Pomp.* 33, 6; 39, 2—3; App., *Mithr.* 106, 501; *Syr.* 51, 257—259; Flor. I, 46, 4—6; Cass. Dio XXXVI, 45, 3; 51, 1; XXXVII, 5, 2—4; 6, 1—5; 7, 1—4; 15, 1; J.-P. Rey-Coquias: "Syrie Romaine, de Pompée à Diocletien." *JRS*, vol. 68, 1978, pp. 44—73; A.N. Sherwin-White: "Lucullus, Pompey and the East." In: *CAH*, vol. 9: "The Last Age of the Roman Republic 146—43 B.C." Eds. J.A. Crook, A. Lintott, E. Rawson. Cambridge 1994, pp. 229—273; R. Syme: "Pompeius and the Parthians." In: *Anatolica. Studies in Strabo*. Ed. A. Birley. Oxford 1995, pp. 87—94. Cf. also: A. Keaweney: "Roman Treaties with Parthia circa 95—64 B.C." *AJPh*, vol. 102, 1981, pp. 195—212; Idem: "The King and the War Lords: Romano-Parthian Relations circa 64—53 B.C." *AJPh*, vol. 103, 1982, pp. 412—428; J. Wolski: "Rzym i państwo Partów w I w. p.n.e." *KH*, t. 92, 1985, pp. 221—233; Idem: "Rzymska polityka na Wschodzie. Imperializm rzymski w konflikcie z imperializmem irańskim." W: *Starożytny Rzym we współczesnych badaniach. Państwo — Społeczeństwo — Gospodarka*. Red. J. Wolski, T. Kotula, A. Kunisz. Kraków 1994, pp. 81—103.

⁵ Cf. in this light: Plut., *Crass.* 17, 2—3; Cass. Dio XL, 12, 2—13, 4; 16, 1—3; B.A. Marshall: *Crassus...*, pp. 151—152; J. Wolski: *Imperium Arsacydów*. Poznań 1996, pp. 154—155.

⁶ The source information and the literature which discuss Crassus's defeat at that time see: Liv., *per.* CVI; Vell. Pat. II, 46, 4; Plut., *Crass.* 17, 4—31; *Pomp.* 53, 6; 55, 1; App., *B.C.* II, 18, 66—67; *Syr.* 51, 259; Flor., I, 46, 5—11; Cass. Dio XL, 17, 3—27, 4; P. Groebe: "Der Schlachtag von Carrhae." *Hermes*, vol. 42, 1907, pp. 315—322; K. Regling: "Crassus' Partherkrieg." *Klio*, Bd. 7, 1907, pp. 357—394; F. Smith: "Die Schlacht bei Carrhae." *HZ*, Bd. 115, 1915, pp. 237—262; D. Timpe: "Die Bedeutung der Schlacht von Carrhae." *MH*, Bd. 19, 1962, pp. 104—129; B.A. Marshall: *Crassus...*, pp. 153—161; M. Mielczarek: "Die parthische Panzerreiterei bei Carrhae. Aus den Studien über Plutarchus, Crassus XXIV — XXVII." *Fasciculi Archeologie Historicae*, vol. 4, 1990, pp. 31—38; J. Wolski: "Rok 53...", pp. 20—30; Idem: *Imperium Arsacydów...*, pp. 155—160; Idem: "Czy rok 53 jest datą przełomową w historii

As a result of the above-mentioned military catastrophe, the eastern dominions of the Roman Republic: Syria and the neighbouring province of Asia Minor, first of all Cilicia, were in great danger, similarly to the local city-states, rulers and peoples allied with Rome, since Rome was still in the state of war against Parthia started by the late Crassus. As his army was defeated, besides minor forces stationing in the above enumerated provinces, the survivors saved from the rout committed by the Parthians and small contingents of their local allies that could enter on Roman request, there was no army that could effectively defend the interests of the Republic and its allies.⁷ It also had to be taken into account that the Parthians would take advantage of the difficult situation their enemy was facing, they would cross Euphrates and attack Rome's allies as well as the provinces which were unable to defend themselves effectively,⁸ especially since some of the Parthian rulers had long exposed their striving for ruling the whole area that used to belong to the Achaemenid Persian Empire in their political programmes and propaganda.⁹

Materializing of these threats could cause the loss of at least some of the eastern provinces and allies as well as a change in the line-up of forces in Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine. Parthia was namely the only rival that could pose a threat to the position of the Roman Republic at that time.¹⁰ Luckily for the

Rzymu." W: *Przełomy w historii. XVI Powszechny Zjazd Historyków Polskich, Wrocław 15–18 września 1999 roku. Pamiętnik*, vol. 2, part 1. Red. K. Juchniewicz, J. Tyszkiewicz, W. Wrzesiński. Toruń 2000, pp. 9–15; G.C. Sampson: *The Defeat of Rome. Crassus, Carrhae and the Invasion of the East*. Barnsley 2008, pp. 114–181.

⁷ C. Cassius Longinus, Crassus's quaestor, organised the necessary army, which amounted to two legions: Cic., *Phil.* XI, 14, 35; Vell. Pat. II, 46, 4–5; Ioseph., *Ant. Iud.* XIV, 7, 3, 119; *Bell. Iud.* I, 8, 9, 180; Cass. Dio XL, 28, 1–2. Cf. also: Flor. I, 46, 10; Eutrop. VI, 18, 2; Oros. VI, 13, 5. More about C. Cassius Longinus: Fröhlich: "C. Cassius Longinus, der Caesarmörder, 59." In: *RE*, Bd. 3. Stuttgart 1899, col. 1727–1736; W. Drumann, P. Groebe: *Geschichte Roms in seinem Übergange von dem republikanischen zur monarchischen Verfassung*. Bd. 2. Leipzig 1902, pp. 98–128, on his activity related to the defence of Syria, see pp. 100–101.

⁸ Cass Dio XL, 28, 3. The Romans took this possibility seriously into account. This is proven by the fact that in year 50 B.C. they prepared the army for the expected war against Parthia: Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 54, 1; 55, 1; Plut., *Caes.* 29, 3; *Pomp.* 56, 3; App., *B.C.* II, 29, 114–115.

⁹ This matter was emphasized by J. Wołski in his studies. See: Idem: "Program polityczny państwa partyjskiego." *Eos*, vol. 55, 1965, pp. 152–159; Idem: "Les Achéménides et les Arsacides." *Syria*, vol. 43, 1966, pp. 65–82; Idem: *Rzym a państwo Partów...*, pp. 222–223; Idem: *Imperium Arsacydów...*, pp. 118, 142–147, more: 117–146. Cf. also: J. Neusner: "Parthian Political Ideology." *Iranica antiqua*, vol. 3, 1963, pp. 40–59.

¹⁰ This thesis is well confirmed by the history of Roman-Parthian relations and especially by the defeat in the war against Parthia, which was provoked by Crassus. The later arguments with them, e.g. those carried on by M. Antonius, ended similarly. As a result, Augustus, the emperor, changed his policy towards Parthians. On the subject of the relations between Romans and Parthians and the position of the latter ones in the world in the 1st century B.C., see: G. Widengren: "Iran, der große Gegner Roms: Königsgewalt, Feudalismus, Militärwesen." In: *ANRW*, T. II, hrsg. H. Temporini, W. Haase, Bd. 9, 1. Berlin—New Hork 1976, pp. 219–306;

Romans, Parthians did not attack the empire's borders directly after the victory over Crassus's army at Carrhae, since their ruler was too busy dealing with the leading aristocratic families, including Surena, the one Crassus's vanquisher came from. The domestic situation of the Parthian kingdom became stable only after he had been killed and the opposition debilitated.¹¹ Therefore, the Parthians invaded the areas belonging to or dependent on Rome only in year 52. It was repeated a year after that and in 50 another invasion was expected, but luckily for the Romans it did not happen.¹²

The scale of these Parthian expeditions was not large enough to result in conquering the eastern provinces. Moreover, they involved only some of the Roman areas and the neighbouring countries. Thus, they did not pose such a huge threat to the Republic and its local allies as it could have been expected just after Crassus's defeat, but the governing politicians did not know that yet. For that reason prevention of further course of events on the Parthian border which would be unfavourable for Rome was definitely a priority for them.

Therefore, it is highly recommended to track and clarify the related actions of Roman authorities (especially the consuls, the senate, the popular assembly and the governors of eastern provinces) and the accompanying circumstances, as well as to trace the contemporary decisions of Cn. Pompeius, who had great influence on their actions. The reason for this is that it may contribute to better cognition of these aspects of the history of Roman Republic, and especially the policy carried out in the East by the Romans at that time.

The most important sources on the basis of which the matters introduced in the title of this article can be presented, are texts which are either contemporary or only a little subsequent to the events considered herein. These texts include Cicero's correspondence from the years 53—50, which is of great significance, especially due to the fact that at that time for one year he was a governor of

J. Wolski: "Les Parthes et la Syrie." *Acta Iranica*, vol. 5, 1977, pp. 395—417; Idem: *Rzym i państwo Partów...*, pp. 221—233; Idem: *Rzymska polityka...*, pp. 83—93; Idem: *Imperium Arsacydów...*, pp. 117—173. Parthians' strong position in the world of that time, especially towards Rome, was denied in the previous studies. Cf. e.g.: L. Piotrowicz: *Dzieje rzymskie*. Warszawa 1934, pp. 573—574; K.H. Ziegler: *Die Beziehungen zwischen Rom und dem Partherreich*. Wiesbaden 1964, pp. 20 ff; H. Bengtson: *Römische Geschichte*. München 1967, p.182.

¹¹ On the internal situation of Parthia, and especially on the conflict between Orodes II and aristocracy: Plut., *Crass.* 33, 5.

¹² On the topic of the situation on the Roman-Parthian border in the years 52—50: Liv., *per.* CVIII; Vell. Pat. II, 46, 5; Ioseph., *Ant. Iud.* XIV, 7, 3, 119 ; 122; Bell. Iud. I, 8, 9, 180; 182; Plut., *Brut.* 7, 2; 43, 5—6; Cass. Dio XI, 28, 1—31, 1; Fest., *Brev.* VI, 18, 2; Oros. VI, 13, 5. Cf. also: L. Piotrowicz: *Dzieje rzymskie...*, p. 445; N.C. Debevoise: *A Political History of Partia*. Chicago—London 1969, pp. 96—104; K. Schipmann: *Grundzüge der parthischen Geschichte*. Darmstadt 1980, pp. 40—41; E. Dąbrowa: *La politique de l'Etat Parthe à l'égard de Rome — d'Artaban II à Vologèse I (ca II — ca 79 de n.e.) et les facteurs qui le conditionnaient*. Kraków 1983, pp. 32—34; M. Jaczynowska: *Dzieje Imperium Romanum*. Warszawa 1995, p. 154. Cassius Dio (XI, 31, 1) indicates that the battles against Parthians ended in 51 B.C.

Cilicia, one of the eastern provinces threatened by Parthia.¹³ The matters related to the studied subject do appear quite frequently in these letters, however they are presented neither constantly, nor in a complex and exhaustive way, because Cicero and his correspondents only mentioned issues bothering them the most. The information they include are of various origin: they mostly come from the authors of these letters, but they also derive from their allies' reports and rumours.¹⁴ For this reason the value of the news varies. They do not only introduce the matters of our interest from the point of view of the Roman rulers, but also from the point of view of different politicians who did not hold any public posts at that time and, moreover, were not Romans.¹⁵

In their later reports, C. Iulius Caesar and A. Hirtius mention some detailed issues only very briefly,¹⁶ similarly to the authors contemporary to the Empire,¹⁷ who also dealt with the matters of our interest rather modestly and economically. Although they were deeply interested in the matter of Roman-Parthian relations, they focused rather on more significant issues, such as Crassus's expedition and especially on its climax, which was the Battle of Carrhae.¹⁸

The issue examined by the author of the present article is similarly presented in subject literature. This is well visible e.g. in the works of J. Debecq,

¹³ Cicero and his correspondents did mention this subject in the several dozen of their letters from those years, however these notes are usually laconic. More on the topic of Cicero's correspondence, see: J. Carcopino: *Cicero. The Secrets of his Correspondence*. Vol. 1—2, New York 1969; K. Kumaniecki: *Literatura rzymska. Okres cyceroński*. Warszawa 1977, pp. 384—399; M. Tullius Cicero was the governor of Cilicia in the years 51—50: W. Feemster Jashemski: *The Origins and History of the Proconsular and the Propaetorian Imperium to 27 B.C.* Chicago 1950, p. 148; T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic*. Vol. 2: 99 B.C. — 31 B.C. New York 1952, pp. 243, 251—252. Cf. also: K. Kumaniecki: "Cyceron w Cylicji." *Meander*, t. 13, 1958, pp. 449—470; Idem: *Cyceron i jego współcześni*. Warszawa 1989, pp. 357—386; M. Gelzer: *Cicero. Ein biographischer Versuch*. Wiesbaden 1969, pp. 225—242; E. Dulski: "Cyceron jako namiestnik Cylicji." W: *Antiquitas*, t. 15. Red. E. Konik. Wrocław 1992, pp. 23—39.

¹⁴ This is quite frequently mentioned by Cicero himself: *Ad Att.* V, 6, 1; 14, 1; 16, 4; *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1; *Ad fam.* XV, 9, 2; 2, 1; III, 8, 10; VIII, 10, 1; II, 10, 2; XV, 4, 5; 7; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2; *Ad fam.* XIII, 57, 1.

¹⁵ The great orator indicates this clearly in many cases: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 1; VIII, 10, 1; 2, 3; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2; VI, 1, 3; *Ad fam.* XV, 4, 7; XIII, 57, 1. He was also given some information by the refugees who came from areas directly jeopardised by Parthian invasion: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 16, 4.

¹⁶ See: *Caes.*, *Bell. civ.* I, 2, 3; 4, 4; 9, 4; 32, 4; *Hirt.*, *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 52, 3; 54, 1—3; 55, 1.

¹⁷ *Liv.*, *per.* CVIII; *Vell. Pat.* II, 46, 4—5; *Ioseph.*, *Ant. Iud.* XIV, 7, 3, 119—122; *Bell. Iud.* I, 8, 9, 180—182; *Plut.*, *Caes.* 29, 3—4; *Pomp.* 56, 3; *Brut.* 7, 2; 43, 5—6; *App.*, *B.C.* II, 29, 114—115; *Cass. Dio XL*, 28, 1—31, 1; 65, 1—66, 1; *Fest.*, *Brev.* VI, 18, 2; *Oros.* VI, 13, 5.

¹⁸ *Liv.*, *per.* CVI; *Vell. Pat.* II, 46, 1—5; *Ioseph.*, *Bell. Iud.* I, 8, 9, 180; *Ant. Iud.* XIV, 7, 3, 119; *Plut.*, *Crass.* 16—33; *Pomp.* 55, 1; *Brut.* 43, 5—6; *App.*, *B.C.* II, 8, 65—67; *Flor.* I, 46; *Cass. Dio XL*, 12—37; *Fest.*, *Brev.* VI, 18, 2; *Oros.* VI, 13, 5.

G. Downey, J.-P. Rey-Coquias, A. Keaveney, E. Dąbrowa, J. Wolski, P. Arnaud and T.P. Hillman, devoted to Roman-Parthian relations, in the studies of A.N. Sherwin-White and A.D. Sullivan, which deal with Roman foreign policy and the relations of Rome and the eastern countries,¹⁹ the papers of P. Stein and M. Bonnefond-Coudry that discuss the functioning and actions of the senate,²⁰ the study of W. Feemster Jashemski, treating of the history of provinces governing,²¹ in the works of the following authors: M. Gelzer, F. Smokowski, K. Kumaniecki, M. Grzesiowski, L.A. Thompson and E. Dulski, which, among other matters, refer to M. Tullius Cicero's activity on the post of the governor of Cilicia,²² or F. Münzer, W. Drumann and P. Groebe, T.R.S. Broughton, M.J.G. Grey-Fow and I. Hofmann-Löbl, concerning the activities of M. Calpurnius Bibulus, the administrator of Syria,²³ as well as in the monographs of N.C. Debevoise, M.A.R. Colledge and J. Wolski, which discuss the history and role

¹⁹ J. Debevoise: "Les Parthes et Rome." *Latomus*, t. 10, 1951, pp. 459—469; G. Downey: "The Occupation of Syria by the Romans." *TAPhA*, vol. 82, 1951, pp. 149—163; J.-P. Rey-Coquias: "Syrie romaine, de Pompée à Diocletien." *JRS*, vol. 68, 1978, pp. 44—73; A. Keaveney: "The King and the War-Lords...", vol. ciii, 1982, pp. 412—428; E. Dąbrowa: *La politique...*, Kraków 1983; A.N. Sherwin-White: *Roman Foreign Policy in the East, 168 B.C. to A.D. 1*. Duckworth 1984; R.D. Sullivan: *Near Eastern Royalty and Rome, 100—30 B.C.* Toronto—Buffalo—London 1990; J. Wolski: "Les Parthes et la Syrie." *AJ*, vol. 5, 1977, pp. 395—417; Idem: *Rzym i państwo Partów...*, pp. 221—233; Idem: *Rzymska polityka na Wschodzie...*, pp. 81—103; Idem: "Wpływ imperializmu rzymskiego na losy wschodnich prowincji rzymskich." W: *Antiquitas*, t. 21, red. T. Kotula, A. Ładomirski. Wrocław 1995, pp. 55—63; P. Arnaud: "Les guerres parthiques de Gabinius et de Crassus et la politique occidentale des Parthes Arsacides entre 70 et 53 av. J.-C." *Electrum*, vol. 2: "Ancient Iran and the Mediterranean World," red. E. Dąbrowa. Kraków 1998, pp. 13—34. Cf. also: T.P. Hillman: "Pompeius ad Parthos?" *Klio*, Bd. 78, 1996, pp. 380—399.

²⁰ P. Stein: *Die Senatssitzungen der Ciceronischen Zeit* (68—430). Münster 1930; M. Bonnefond-Coudry: *Le Sénat de la République romaine de la guerre d'Hannibal à Auguste*. Rome 1989.

²¹ W. Feemster Jashemski: *The Origins and History...*

²² M. Gelzer: "M. Tullius Cicero der Redner, 29." In: *RE*, 2 Reihe, Hlb. 13, Stuttgart 1939, col. 827—1091; F. Smokowski: "Cyceron w Azji." *Eos*, vol. 47, 1957, pp. 111—125; K. Kumaniecki: "Cyceron w Cylicji...", pp. 449—470; M. Grzesiowski: "Wojskowa kampania Cycerona w Cylicji jesienią 51 roku." *Meander*, t. 15, 1960, pp. 155—166; Idem: "Partowie zagrażają wschodnim prowincjom rzymskim wiosną i latem 50 r. p.n.e." *Meander*, t. 15, 1960, pp. 288—295; L.A. Thompson: "Cicero's succession — problem in Cilicia." *AJPh*, vol. 86, 1965, pp. 375—386; E. Dulski: "Cyceron jako namiestnik Cylicji...", pp. 23—39.

²³ F. Münzer: "M. Calpurnius Bibulus, 28." In: *RE*, Hlb. 5, Stuttgart 1897, col. 1368—1370; W. Drumann, P. Groebe: *Geschichte Roms...*, Bd. 2, Leipzig 1902, pp. 80—86; T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates...*, vol. 2, pp. 242, 250; R. Syme: "M. Bibulus and Four Sons." *HSCPh*, vol. 91, 1987, pp. 185—198; M.J.G. Grey-Fow: "The Mental Breakdown of a Roman Senator: M. Calpurnius Bibulus." *GR*, vol. 37, 1990, pp. 179—190; I. Hofmann-Löbl: *Die Calpurnii*. Frankfurt am Main 1996.

of the Parthians in the East.²⁴ Some information related to the discussed matter can also be encountered in presentations of various aspects of the crisis of the Roman Republic²⁵ and in the synthetic studies of the history of its last decades.²⁶

It was impossible to prevent or even reduce the threat that Parthia was posing directly after Crassus's defeat at Carrhae or in the following months, because the capital of the Republic had been long plunged in anarchy. Government offices in Rome did not function and the rule was in the hands of *interreges*, who were changed every five days. They were in office for a very short time and, what is more, were not competent enough, which prevented them from dealing with military issues and foreign policy.²⁷

This was mainly caused by the exacerbating rivalry for high-ranking posts and corruption spreading during elections. As a result of revealing in year 54 most probably the biggest corruption scandal in the history of the Roman Republic the consuls and, as a consequence, other *magistratus curules* elections for the following year did not take place.²⁸

As well as this, the complicated situation in Rome in year 53 was also a result of an argument that took place in year 54 between the optimates and Cn. Pompeius. Aiming at weakening the position of the only triumvir in Rome at that time, they initiated an array of campaigns against his closest coworkers, which usually ended in lawsuits against them.²⁹ Pompeius responded with preventing his enemies from efficient ruling by sustaining anarchy in the capital

²⁴ N.C. Debevoise: *A Political History of Parthia...*; M.A.R. Colledge: *The Parthians*. London 1967; J. Wolski: *Imperium Arsacydów...*

²⁵ See. e.g.: E. Meyer: *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompejus*. Stuttgart—Berlin 1922; J. Dickinson: *Death of a Roman Republic. Politics and Political Thought at Rome 59—44 B.C.* New York—London 1963.

²⁶ Cf. e.g.: T. Rice Holmes: *The Roman Republic and the Founder of the Empire*, vol. 2. Oxford 1923; *CAH*, vol. 9.

²⁷ See. in this context: Cic., *Ad fam.* VII, 11, 1; II, 4, 1; 5, 1—2; Plut., *Caes.* 28. 3—4; Pomp. 54, 2; App., *B.C.* II, 19, 68—71; Cass. Dio XL, 17, 1—2; 45, 1—46, 1; E. Meyer: *Caesars Monarchie...*, pp. 207—214, Cf. also 191—207; T. Rice Holmes: *The Roman Republic...*, vol. 2, pp. 152—159; J. Dickinson: *Death of a Roman Republic...*, pp. 154—155.

²⁸ Plut., *Pomp.* 54, 2; Cat. *Min.* 44; App., *B.C.* II, 19, 69—71; Cass. Dio XL, 45, 1; 2—4; cf.: Plut., *Caes.* 28, 3; J. Linderski: *Rzymskie zgromadzenie wyborcze od Sulli do Cezara*. Wrocław—Warszawa—Kraków 1966, pp. 142—147; G.V. Sumner: "The Coitio of 54 B.C., or Waiting for Cesar." *HSCPh*, vol. 86, 1982, pp. 133—139; H. Kowalski: "Przemoc jako metoda walki wyborczej w okresie schyłku republiki (78—50 r. p.n.e.)." *AUMCS*, Sect. F, 1983/1984, 38—39, pp. 87—88; Idem: "Przekupstwa wyborcze w Rzymie w okresie schyłku republiki (78—50 p.n.e.)." *RL*, t. 29—30, 1987—1988, pp. 15—16; Idem: "Armia a wybory w Rzymie w okresie schyłku republiki." In: *Antiquitas*, vol. 14, red. A. Ładomirski. Wrocław 1988, p. 123.

²⁹ Cass. Dio XXXIX, 60, 2—4; 61, 3—63, 5; M. Gelzer: *Pompeius*. München 1949, pp. 178—179; R. Seager: *Pompey. A Political Biography*. Berkeley—Los Angeles 1979, pp. 132—141; M.C. Alexander: *Trials in the Late Roman Republic, 149 B.C. to 50 B.C.* Toronto—Buffalo—London 1990, pp. 137—149.

and spreading rumours among its inhabitants about the necessity of introducing dictatorship to establish order.³⁰

Using his influence, Pompeius succeeded in maintaining anarchy in Rome until July, or even August 53.³¹ Only then, after being granted the supervision over the Republic as a proconsul, he helped the present *interrex* to conduct the election of officials for the last months of that year.³² Yet, since the senate disagreed with his dictatorship, after the election he returned to his former practices. In effect, the newly elected consuls did not succeed in electing their successors or any other *magistratus curules* for the year 52, which, therefore, also begun with *interregnum*.³³ What is more, due to the growing competition between T. Annius Milo and P. Clodius, the anarchy in the capital was spreading even more.³⁴ Only after the assassination of Clodius, committed by Milo's squads at the end of the second decade of January, the senate, influenced by M. Calpurnius Bibulus and M. Porcius Cato, decided to invest Pompeius with the special power, yet, as consul without colleague.³⁵

³⁰ Plut., *Caes.* 28, 4; *Pomp.* 54, 2; *Cat. Min.* 45, 4; App., *B.C.* II, 20, 72—73; Cass. Dio XL, 45, 1—5; J.P. Borle: *Pompée et la dictature*, 55—50 av. J.-C., *LEC*, vol. 20, 1952, pp. 172—175.

³¹ Plut., *Pomp.* 54, 2—3; App., *B.C.* II, 19, 71; Cass. Dio XL, 45, 1. L. Piotrowicz (*Dzieje...*, p. 424) suggests that the elections of the consuls took place in July. H. Kowalski presents this similarly: "Przemoc...", pp. 87—88. More on this topic, see: J. Linderski: *Rzymskie zgromadzenie wyborcze...*, pp. 147—148.

³² Plut., *Pomp.* 54, 2—3; App., *B.C.* II, 19, 71; Cass. Dio XL, 45, 5—46, 1; J. Linderski: *Rzymskie zgromadzenie wyborcze...*, pp. 148; H. Kowalski: "Przemoc...", pp. 87—88.

³³ Cic., *Ad fam.* V, 18, 1; III, 1, 1; Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3; Plut., *Pomp.* 54, 3; *Cat. Min.* 47, 1—2; App., *B.C.* II, 20, 72—73; Cass. Dio XL, 44, 2; 46, 1—3. Cf. also: Liv., *per.* CVII; E. Meyer: *Caesars Monarchie...*, pp. 211—214; T. Rice Holmes: *The Roman Republic...*, pp. 163—165; J.P. Borle: *Pompée...*, pp. 175—176; J. Dickinson: *Death...*, p. 155; J. Linderski: *Rzymskie zgromadzenie wyborcze...*, pp. 148—150; A. Yakobson: *Elections and Electioneering in Rome. A Study in the Political System of the Late Republic. Historia Einzelschriften*, H. 128, Stuttgart 1999, p. 171.

³⁴ This happened, among other things, because T. Annius Milon intended to strive for the consulate and P. Clodius — for the office of praetor. Both of them had the support of certain circles among the inhabitants of the capital, which additionally contributed to the revival of the antagonism that had been setting them at variance for a few years: Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 6, 3—5; Liv., *per.* CVII; Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3; Plut., *Pomp.* 54, 3; *Cat. Min.* 47, 1—2; App., *B.C.* II, 20, 74; Cass. Dio XL, 47, 1—48, 1; A. Yakobson: *Elections...*, pp. 171—173.

³⁵ Cic., *Ad fam.* VII, 2, 2—3; Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3—4; Suet., *Iul.* 26, 1; Plut., *Caes.* 28, 5; *Pomp.* 54, 3—4; *Cat. Min.* 47, 2—3; App., *B.C.* II, 21, 75—23, 84; Cass. Dio XL, 48, 1—50, 5; J. van Ooteghem: *Pompée le Grand, bâtisseur d'Empire*. Louvain—Namur—Paris, 1954, pp. 438—444; J. Leach: *Pompey the Great*. London 1978, pp. 155—157. On the subject of his choice: J. Linderski: *Rzymskie zgromadzenie wyborcze...*, pp. 150—152; H. Kowalski: "Przemoc...", pp. 88—89; A. Yakobson: *Elections...*, p. 58. According to Livius (*per.* CVII), Pompeius was then elected consul in absentia.

After being pronounced consul, Pompeius started organizing the matters of the country straight away.³⁶ Internal issues, and especially striving for the reinforcement of his position in the Republic, were his priorities, though. Although he did also deal with the threat posed by Parthians, so to speak, by the way, while he was taking care of other problems.³⁷ However, this does not mean that he ignored the danger in the eastern dominions of Rome — on the contrary, it was of great importance for him to obviate the danger, since this would guarantee that he would remain influential in the East.³⁸ The fact that Pompeius did not emphasize these matters in his moves in year 52 might have been related to his unwillingness to irritate the aristocrats of optimate orientation who dominated in the senate at that time and who had been his new allies since he was invested with the special power.³⁹ This is indicated by the opposition he met in the senate when, after finishing the third war with Mithradates VI and coming back from Italia, he asked for approval of the orders he gave in the East.⁴⁰

To protect Roman dominions and eastern areas from Parthians, it was necessary to take care of a few problems. Syria, which bordered Parthia directly and was defended from the Parthian king designs by C. Cassius Longinus, the quaestor of the late M. Licinius Crassus,⁴¹ needed a new governor as soon as possible. Moreover, just like the nearby Cilicia and other provinces of Asia Minor, it also needed reinforcements to repulse the expected Parthian attacks effectively together with the few local troops. Also the local allies of Rome

³⁶ Cic., *Ad fam.* V, 18, 2; VII, 2, 2—3; Liv., *per.* CVII; Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3—4; 48, 1; Plut., *Pomp.* 54, 5; 55, 4—7; *Cat. Min.* 48; App., *B.C.* II, 23, 87—24, 92; 25, 95; Cass. Dio XL, 50, 5; 52—55.

³⁷ Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3—48, 1; Plut., *Pomp.* 55, 1; 7; App., *B.C.* II, 24, 92—25, 95; Cass. Dio XL, 51—56. Cf. also: 57 as well as Liv., *per.* CVII.

³⁸ He enjoyed this considerable influence in this area since the time he was at war with Mithradates VI, the king of Pontus, during and after which he established in this region new political order, which was convenient for himself as well. On the topic of Pompeius's activity in the East and its results, see e.g.: G. Wirth: "Pompeius im Osten." *Klio*, Bd. 66, 1984, pp. 574—580; M. Dreher: "Pompeius und die kaukasischen Völker: Kolcher, Iberer, Albaner." *Historia*, Bd. 45, 1996, pp. 188—207; J. Bellemore: "Josephus Pompey and the Jews." *Historia*, Bd. 48, 1999, pp. 94—118; J. Wagner: *Östlicher Mittelmeerraum und Mesopotamien. Die Neuordnung des Orientis von Pompeius bis Augustus (67 v. Chr. bis 14 n. Chr.)*. Wiesbaden 1983.

³⁹ Cf. in this light: Liv., *per.* CVII; Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3; Suet., *Iul.* 26, 1; Plut., *Caes.* 28, 5; *Pomp.* 54, 3—5; 55, 1—3; *Cat. Min.* 47, 2—3; App., *B.C.* II, 23, 84; 25, 95; Cass. Dio XL, 50, 4—5.

⁴⁰ See. on this topic: Cic., *Ad Att.* I, 13, 4; 14, 1; Vell. Pat. II, 40, 5; Suet., *Iul.* 19, 2; Plut., *Pomp.* 46, 3; *Cat. Min.* 31, 1; *Luc.* 42, 5—6; App., *B.C.* II, 9, 31—32; Cass. Dio XXXVII, 49, 2; 49, 4—50, 1; J. Murphy: "Pompey's Eastern Acta." *AHB*, vol. 7, 1993, pp. 136—142. Cf. also the literature quoted in footnote 38.

⁴¹ Liv., *per.* CVIII; Vell. Pat. II, 46, 5; Cass. Dio XL, 28, 1—29, 3.

required reinforcements in order to make them defy Parthia willingly or to prevent them from changing their orientation and join Parthian king.⁴²

Of course, these demands could not have been fulfilled at once, due to the complicated situation in the capital in the year 52. Meeting those demands required time because of the huge distance separating Syria and Asia Minor from Italia, for instance. However, it should not have been deferred, despite the fact that from Cn. Pompeius's and his new allies', who were dominating in the senate, point of view there were some more urgent problems in Rome to be dealt with.⁴³ Taking into consideration the immense significance of the eastern provinces for the empire, as well as his own interests, Pompeius started to take care of those issues as soon as it was possible.

The most important matter was to appoint a new governor of Syria and invest him with powers which would correspond to the dangers threatening this province at that time, so that he could replace C. Cassius Longinus. This was because until then the only move of Roman authorities as far as Syria was concerned was to accept the part that Longinus had been playing in Syria since Crassus's defeat at Carrhae.⁴⁴ Due to the complicated situation in Rome and lack of any possibilities in this aspect, no other action was taken. In the year 52 appointing a governor of Syria was still a complex issue, since Crassus was handed over control of Syria for five years on the basis of *Lex Trebonia*. It was thanks to this very law that Pompeius was entrusted with governing Spanish provinces for the same period of time and under the same conditions.⁴⁵ Crassus was already dead, but *Lex Trebonia* was still legally binding and Pompeius was

⁴² This anxiety was justified, which was proven by the attitude of the Armenian king: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 1. In order to prevent such moves of the local allies, the senate decided to take appropriate preventive steps. Cf. pp. 55–56.

⁴³ This point of view of these politicians proves well the justification of the motion with which M. Calpurnius Bibulus and M. Porcius Cato suggested to entrust Pompeius with the post of consul without colleague: Plut., *Caes.* 28, 5; *Pomp.* 54, 3–4. Cf. also: Liv., *per.* CVII; Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3; Suet., *Iul.* 26, 1; Plut., *Cat. Min.* 47, 2–3; App., *B.C.* II, 22, 79–23, 84; Cass. Dio XL, 50, 4–5.

⁴⁴ This is proven by Cicero's letter, in the headline of which he addresses C. Cassius Longinus proquaestor: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 14, prescript. Cf. also: W. Feemster Jashemski: *The Origins...*, p. 156; T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates...*, vol. 2, pp. 237, 242; Idem: vol. 3: *Supplement*, Atlanta 1986, p. 51. According to Cassius Dio (XL, 28, 2), C. Cassius was granted the command over the troops stationing in Syria by the soldiers and, directly after the battle of Carrhae, before his death, also by Crassus, however Cassius did not accept it. Still, in the next months of the year 53 and in the following years he had Syria under his care. In this light the Roman authorities only accepted the state of affairs being.

⁴⁵ This is especially emphasized by Cassius Dio (XXXIX, 33, 2). This matter is presented similarly also by other ancient authors who mention the second consulate of Pompeius and Crassus as well as this law: Liv., *per.* CV; Vell. Pat. II, 46, 2; 48, 1; Plut., *Pomp.* 52, 3; *Cat. Min.* 43, 1; App., *B.C.* II, 18, 65. On the subject of *Lex Trebonia* see literature quoted in footnote 2.

still governing Spain.⁴⁶ Moreover, the senate, which traditionally assigned new governors to different provinces, could not change or invalidate a law passed by the citizens by its own resolution. This law could be repealed only in one way: by a new resolution of popular assembly. Only Pompeius, who had huge power at that time and, thus, the adequate authority, could bring to it.⁴⁷

Taking all these points into account, the potent politician began to take care of the problem of Syrian administration in a rather extraordinary way. In order not to get entangled in contradictions of legal nature, he first introduced a new decision which prolonged his governing of the Spanish provinces for another term, starting with the year 52.⁴⁸ It is not known whether the decision was introduced in the senate or within popular assembly, but in practice this meant canceling *Lex Trebonia*. In this way he removed legal obstacles which prevented Syria from having a new governor appointed. However, he did not regulate this question separately. He solved it at once by a new resolution of public assembly along with normalizing the method of appointing governors of the other provinces, because since the time of L. Cornelius Sulla, who had determined this method of appointing them, the order he established became seriously disrupted.⁴⁹ Aiming at eradicating corruption and eliminating violence

⁴⁶ On the basis of this law Pompeius was to hold the post of the governor of the Spanish provinces until the year 50. See. in this light: Plut., *Caes.* 28, 5; *Pomp.* 52, 3; App., *B.C.* II, 18, 65; Cass. Dio XXXIX, 33, 2.

⁴⁷ According to Livius (per. CVII) and Velleius Paterculus (II, 47, 3—4) in the year 52 Pompeius was officially pronounced to be in charge of the Republic and the one to deal with the bringing the chaos it was engulfed in under control. See.: Suet., *Iul.* 26, 1. A different view of this matter, see: Plut., *Caes.* 28, 5; *Pomp.* 54, 3—4; *Cat. Min.* 47, 1—3; App., *B.C.* II, 23, 84; Cass. Dio XL, 50, 4—5.

⁴⁸ Thanks to this, Pompeius secured his position. As a result, in the future, in case of a change in the situation in the country, or breaking the alliances, neither his enemies nor the senate could change his position easily. The ancient authors present this matter in an unclear and ambiguous way. According to Cassius Dio (XL, 56, 2), Pompeius “took” the Spanish provinces for further five years. In Pompeius’s hagiography (55, 7), in this respect Plutarch alludes to a voting, however it is not known where — in a public assembly or in the senate. Yet, in Caesar’s biography (28, 5) he mentions that the governing in these provinces was extended by the senate. Appian (*B.C.* II, 24, 92), however, claims that the senate passed giving him two additional legions and extending his governing, but this does not have to mean that it took the final decision in this matter. It is possible that this was only a resolution approving of handing down this question for people debate. See. also: M. Gelzer: *Pompeius...*, pp. 191—192; J. van Ooteghem: *Pompée...*, p. 460; J. Leach: *Pompey...*, pp. 160—161; R. Seager: *Pompey...*, p. 150.

⁴⁹ The orders of L. Cornelius Sulla concerning this matter included that each consul and praetor, after having handed in their office, would take over the running of a province for one year. However, sometimes some of the former officials, as e.g. Caesar, Pompeius, Crassus and other influential Romans, were granted the governing of provinces not for one, but for several years. What is more, the two prior ones governed more than one province. Others, as e.g. M. Tullius Cicero, did not want to leave Rome and go to their provinces, so they did not take over the running of these provinces. The already mentioned Crassus and Pompeius acted similarly

during competition for the highest offices,⁵⁰ he also decided, in accordance with the senate's previous year's resolution, that from then on the politicians who were to assume the office of consul or praetor can only be given control over provinces after five years had passed from submitting the office.⁵¹ In order not to cause chaos in the nearest years while filling the posts with new governors, according to *lex Pompeia de provinciis*, which regulated these issues, it was agreed that first of all the posts would be given to the former consuls and praetors who, after having submitted their posts, had not taken care of any province yet, because of different reasons.⁵²

Since the problem of filling the posts of governors had been solved altogether and in the same way for each of them, this meant also that Syria and the provinces of Asia Minor (Asia, Bithynia and Pontus, Cilicia) would not have new governors appointed straight away, but only after the previous governors' terms had passed, which was going to happen in the year 51.⁵³ It was then when some decisions were made, according to the norms and decisions concerning this issues and included in the mentioned Pompeius's law, but also in accordance with the senate's resolution.⁵⁴ Syria was entrusted to a former consul from the year 59, M. Calpurnius Bibulus, and Cilicia was assigned also to a former consul, but from the year 63, M. Tullius Cicero. The control over Asia was given to Quintus Minucius Thermus, a former praetor of the year 58, and over Bithynia and Pontus — to P. Silius, the former praetor of year 57.⁵⁵

after the first consulate held in the year 70. As a result of such practice the system of the staffing introduced by Sulla collapsed, especially because since his times the number of provinces increased and did not correspond to the number of the posts of consuls and praetors, who were the officials entitled to administer them. On the topic of Sulla's reforms concerning this subject, see: J. Macdonald Cobban: *Senate and Provinces*, 78—49 B.C., pp. 72—82; cf. also 82—87; Th. Hantos: *Die Verfassung des Dictators Sulla*. *Hermes Einzelschriften*, H. 50, Stuttgart 1988, pp. 89—120.

⁵⁰ Vell. Pat. II, 47, 3. Cf. also in this light: Liv., *per.* CVII; Plut., Pomp. 54, 2; 55, 4; *Cat.*, Min. 48, 2—4; App., B.C. II, 23, 87—24, 92; Cass. Dio XL, 51—55.

⁵¹ Cassius Dio paid attention to this fact (XL, 46, 2; 56, 1); H. Kowalski: "Przekupstwa...", p. 16. Pompeius, however, did not obey this rule, since while he was the consul in the year 52, he extended his governing of Spanish provinces by five years.

⁵² This was the consequence of previous rule (Cass. Dio XL, 46, 2; 56, 1).

⁵³ See: W. Feemster Jashemski: *The Origins...*, pp. 138, 148, 152, 155—156; T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates...*, vol. 2, pp. 242—243.

⁵⁴ This is emphasized by Cicero in the context of his governing in the letter to Appius Claudius Pulcher, the former administrator of Cilicia: *Ad fam.* III, 2, 2. More on the topic of political and legal basis of the post held by the great orator in this province: A.J. Marshall: "The *lex Pompeia de provinciis* (52 B.C.) and Cicero's *Imperium* in 51—50 B.C.: Constitutional Aspects." In: *ANRW*, T. I, hrsg. H. Temporini, Bd. 1. Berlin—New York 1972, pp. 887—921.

⁵⁵ On the subject of staffing these provinces with new administrators, see: W. Feemster Jashemski: *The Origins...*, pp. 138, 148, 152, 155—156; T.R.S. Broughton: *The Magistrates...*, vol. 2, pp. 242—243, 250—252.

Also the powers of these governors were adjusted to the current needs. This was of great importance especially in the case of Bibulus and Cicero, since it was their provinces which were the most threatened by Parthia.⁵⁶ Thanks to this, with Pompeius's and the senate's help, they could start increasing the number of soldiers stationing there and, after the seizure, defending these territories. Having enough competence and such major support they were also able to carry out the, as it would seem at that time, attractive and effective policy with regard to their local allies.⁵⁷

However, the new governors did not take up their missions enthusiastically, some of them treating them even as a necessary evil.⁵⁸ Their reluctance to the tasks they have been entrusted with, often against their will, might have been caused by the level of difficulty and danger they could expect after assuming their roles. That is why they made use of their presence in Rome, and even before leaving Italia they tried to gain the decision to increase immediately the number of troops stationing in their provinces.⁵⁹ They tried to achieve this by the senate and by Pompeius, who had a lot of say, or even the final word, in public matters. Both Pompeius and the majority of senators acknowledged and supported these aspirations,⁶⁰ but one of the then consuls, Servius Sulpicius Rufus, prevented the senate from passing the resolution.⁶¹ It is not known what induced him to do so. It might have been the already growing feud between Caesar and Pompeius, since Sulpicius supported the former one and he could have feared that the army gathered in Italia would eventually be used against the conqueror of Gaul.⁶²

⁵⁶ It is not known when exactly this happened. Cicero wrote about the expected resolution of the senate concerning this issue in several letters just after leaving Rome: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 4, 2; 5, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1.

⁵⁷ Cf. in this light: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 4, 2; 5, 1; 6, 1; 7, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1—2; *Ad Att.* V, 14, 1; *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 1—2.

⁵⁸ It was especially noticeable in M. Tullius Cicero's attitude, who emphasized his reluctance to the mission of governing Cilicia, which he was entrusted with against his own will, in numerous letters. See. e.g.: Cic., *Ad fam.* III, 2, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 11, 1; 15, 1. Also M. Calpurnius Bibulus was reluctant as far as assuming the duties of the administrator of Syria is concerned: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 16, 4; *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 2; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1.

⁵⁹ On the subject of the efforts to achieve this, especially Cicero's, see: Cic., *Ad fam.* III, 2, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 4, 2; 5, 1; 7, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1—2.

⁶⁰ Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 6, 1; 7, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1.

⁶¹ Ibidem; P. Stein: *Die Senatssitzungen...*, pp. 55—56. More about this politician, see: G. Pianko: "Korespondenci Cyserona. Serwiusz Sulpicjusz Rufus." *Meander*, t. 18, 1963, pp. 16—25.

⁶² Suet., *Iul.* 29, 1; Cass. Dio XL, 59, 1; E. Meyer: *Caesars Monarchie...*, pp. 245—246; N. Rogosz: "Senat a konflikt Pompejusza z Cezarem. Wniosek konsula Marcellusa z 51 roku p.n.e. w sprawie odwołania Cezara z prowincji." In: *Antiquitas*, t. 13, Red. E. Konik. Wrocław 1987, pp. 214, 220—222; Idem: "Funkcjonowanie senatu w Republice Rzymskiej

In this situation the senate forced the newly appointed governors to leave immediately in order to prevent further deterioration of the situation in the East.⁶³ Thus, they left the capital without his decision to increase the number of legions which were to repulse Parthians, but during their journey they continued to take care of this matter, as well as the problem of a sufficient number of commanders, the pay and the condition of their predecessors' troops.⁶⁴ Eventually, the awaited resolution was passed by the senate.⁶⁵

The governors of the eastern provinces were allowed to carry out additional levy, however not within Italy, which they were particularly interested in due to the value of the local recruits, but within the area of Asia Minor.⁶⁶ It is not surprising that they were not satisfied with this solution, for the indigenous inhabitants of Asia Minor were not highly valued soldier material.⁶⁷ In this situation they had to decide to recruit the Roman citizens who stayed in the eastern provinces permanently or temporarily at that time.⁶⁸ Still, this source of recruitment was not too big. Moreover, as Cicero indicates, the Romans staying in the east, facing the perspective of participating in the war against Parthia, tried to avoid at any cost being conscripted into the legions formed there.⁶⁹ For this reason especially Bibulus and the already mentioned Cicero could not have counted on significant increase in the number of their troops. As a result, when they assumed the posts of the administrators of Syria and Cilicia, they had rather sparse forces.⁷⁰

w 51 r. p.n.e.” *Res Historica*, t. 5: *Graecorum et Romanorum memoria*. Ed. L. Morawiecki. Lublin 1998, pp. 138—140; M. Bonnefond-Coudry: *Le Sénat...*, p. 560.

⁶³ Cic., *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1. Thus, Cicero left Rome on 1st May 51: K. Kumaniecki: *Cycon i jego współcześni...*, p. 357; E. Dulski: “Cycon jako namiestnik...,” p. 25; Idem: “Podróże Marka Tulliusza Cycon do Grecji.” In: *Antiquitas*, t. 16. Ed. E. Konik. Wrocław 1992, pp. 8—9.

⁶⁴ Cicero's efforts concerning this issue are well substantiated: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 4, 2; 5, 1; 6, 1; 7, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1—2; *Ad Att.* V, 14, 1; 15, 1; 17, 2; M. Bonnefond-Coudry: *Le Sénat...*, p. 211.

⁶⁵ It is not known when exactly eventually the senate made this decision. However, this fact is proven by the information included in Cicero's letter, in a form of a report, to the senate and the officials, in which the great orator reported on the results of his current achievements concerning the province he was entrusted with: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 2, 4. See. also: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 4, 2; 5, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1.

⁶⁶ Ibidem; Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 18, 2.

⁶⁷ Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 1, 5. This is why Cicero, despite everything, insisted on the senate to let supplement the army forces stationing in Cilicia by the levy from Italy. (Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 4, 2; 5, 1; *Ad fam.* III, 3, 1). This was also the reason for which he wanted App. Claudius, who had governed this province in the preceding years, not to send his troops home and leave them in good condition (Cic., *Ad fam.* III, 2, 1; 3, 2; *Ad Att.* V, 14, 1).

⁶⁸ Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 18, 2.

⁶⁹ Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 1, 6.

⁷⁰ Cicero incessantly emphasized this in his letters addressed to various Roman politicians and the senate: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 15, 1; *Ad fam.* VIII, 15, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1—2; *Ad fam.* XV, 1, 4—5.

Therefore Cicero, for instance, using various methods, attempted to increase the battle value of his rather modest army. Among other things, he looked after friendly atmosphere in the legions subordinate to him, he also made sure that the soldiers were well treated and took care of the fact that they did not complain about anything.⁷¹ Similarly, he looked after the inhabitants of Cilicia. He particularly cared for the fact that the soldiers' attitude towards him and the Romans in general was as good as possible. He was namely perfectly aware of the fact that otherwise he could not count on them during the battles with the Parthians.⁷²

The situation of the Romans could have also been influenced by the conduct of their local allies, which is why the senate recommended the governors of the eastern provinces appropriate attitude towards them. This can be suggested, since in one of his letters written to T. Pomponius Atticus Cicero explained how he perceived his tasks regarding the allies of the Republic and the resulting priorities. These included: lenient treatment, acting towards them with moderation, and keeping the pledges.⁷³ These factors were to help retain their support, thanks to which the Romans wanted to keep their influence in the whole region. They also hoped that these allies would defy Parthians' activity aimed at winning as many as possible rulers, peoples and cities, also at Roman expense. These aims could be proven by Armenian attitude, whose ruler married his sister off to the son of the Parthian king and became closely affiliated to him.⁷⁴ The efforts of the Romans should not be a surprise, as there was going to be a longer war between these two superpowers, among other reasons. After Crassus's defeat at Carrhae, when the Romans had little chances to succeed in a clash with Parthia, more and more eastern rulers started acting ambiguously and did not want to support the Romans actively.⁷⁵ For this reason the Republic did not have many allies and it needed them badly. Bearing this in mind, presumably in order to encourage the rest of the allies to persevere, the senate particularly

⁷¹ Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 14, 2; 18, 2; *Ad fam.* XV, 2, 1. As it can be assumed, Cicero's subordinates acted similarly due to appropriate orders of their governor, who, therefore, had reasons to be proud: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 17, 2.

⁷² He especially cared about the fact that his subordinates and the officers would not commit malpractice (Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 17, 2). He also intended to devote a lot of attention to judicature (Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 14, 2). Cf. also: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 2.

⁷³ Ibidem. See also in the same context: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 2, 4; 7.

⁷⁴ Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 1.

⁷⁵ Cf. in this light: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 1; 1, 5—6. Only few of the local allies remained faithful to the Romans. Dejotar was an exception notable for his loyalty and, thus, highly praised by Cicero: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 18, 2; *Ad fam.* XV, 1, 6. Their attitude, however, should not surprise anybody, due to the scantiness of the Roman army in that region, since everyone was expecting an outbreak of a huge war between the Romans and the Parthians: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 1, 4—5.

recommended some eastern rulers, for example Ariobarzanes, to the governors of the local provinces.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, when in summer of the year 51 C. Cassius sent news to Rome that the Parthians had crossed Euphrates and invaded Syria, he was not given credence.⁷⁷ Many senators doubted as to whether these news were true or accused Cassius of exaggeration. They actually went as far as to assert that he sent them to hide his malpractice and especially the alleged plunders in Syria and that he would explain the ruin of this province by the robberies committed by the Parthians.⁷⁸ The news in Cassius's letters were looked at differently only when they were confirmed by the letters of Dejotar, who also sounded a warning about the danger that the Parthians were posing and informed about their invasion.⁷⁹ This news resulted in the senate changing their stand, because until then it did not acknowledge the threat that Parthia was posing and procrastinated the prevention with appropriate decisions and moves.⁸⁰ At last the Romans realized that the governors of Syria and Cilicia would not be able to stop the Parthians, even with the support of other provinces of Asia Minor and the contingents provided by the allies. One of the reasons was that neither Bibulus nor Cicero were outstanding leaders and thought rather about how to prevent a general war than how to oppose the invaders.⁸¹ For this reason the senate suggested to send an experienced leader to the East, who would deal with the problem of Parthian threat in favour of Rome. Some claimed that this person should be Pompeius.⁸² They were undoubtedly driven by the fact that he had numerous military achievements to his credit and, what is more, he knew those countries, because in the sixties, after L. Licinius Lucullus had been dismissed from the commander-in-chief post, Pompeius continued the war against Mithradates. After having won this war, Pompeius established order, which provided him with great influence and respect in this region.⁸³ These assets made Pompeius the most suitable candidate to lead the war against Parthia.

⁷⁶ Cicero stressed it strongly in his extensive, report-like letter written to the senate: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 2, 4; 7; M. Bonnefond-Coudry: *Le Sénat...*, p. 442.

⁷⁷ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 1; 3. See also in this context: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 16, 4; *Ad fam.* VIII, 15, 1; XV, 3, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1; *Ad fam.* XV, 9, 2; 2, 1; 1, 1—3; III, 8, 10.

⁷⁸ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 3.

⁷⁹ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 1; 3.

⁸⁰ On the topic of the former position of the senate towards the Parthian threat to the eastern provinces see: Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 2—3; P. Stein: *Die Senatssitzungen...*, pp. 55—58. Cf. also: R. Kamienik: "O senatus frequens i o absencjach Cycerona w senacie." In: *Antiquitas*, t. 15, 1992. Ed. E. Konik. Wrocław 1992, p. 94; N. Rogosz: "Funkcjonowanie senatu...", pp. 138—140, 149—151.

⁸¹ See in this context: Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 5, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1.

⁸² The discussion on this matter was widely reflected in Cicero's correspondence: Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 2. Cf. also: VIII, 5, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1.

⁸³ On the topic of the effects of Gn. Pompeius's activity in the East and the influence he enjoyed in that region and in Rome see: Vell. Pat. II, 40, 2; Plut., *Pomp.* 46, 1; App., *B.C.* II, 1, 2; Cass. Dio XXXVII, 20, 1—5. See also: Liv., *per.* C — CII; Vell. Pat. II, 37; 40; Plut., *Pomp.*

Still, some other senators claimed that Caesar would be a better candidate for this mission.⁸⁴ They backed this up with his successes in Gaul and particularly dealing with the Gaulish uprising the year before. Yet, other senators suggested that they should entrust the consuls of the year 51 with this task,⁸⁵ however the latter ones feared it, so they obstructed the senate's session on this issue. As a result, there were no concrete decisions, due to the consuls' dilatory acting and the fact that they simply did not care about solving this problem, really.⁸⁶

In this situation, the governors of the eastern provinces assumed a similar attitude, especially Cicero and Bibulus, whose actions were indecisive. They cared more about the formal fulfilment of their duties than about real engagement into the fights against the Parthians.⁸⁷ Therefore, when summer of the year 51 ended and the Parthians withdrew from Antioch, the contentment of both the governors reached its peak.⁸⁸ Many Roman politicians, however, were aware of the fact that this was not the end of the war. They expected that in the year 50 for many months the contemporary consuls, the senate and first of all the administrators of Syria and the adjoining Cilicia would have to deal with the Parthians again.⁸⁹

Their fears were justified, since the Parthians did not leave the Roman area in the year 51 and their troops were still staying on the right bank of Euphrates.⁹⁰ Despite this, C. Cassius, who was successfully repulsing their attacks on Antioch, considered the combats with the Parthians finished.⁹¹ However, Cicero, who ruled Cilicia, was of different opinion, just like king Dejotar. They claimed that the Parthians decided to winter on the occupied area, as they waited for the arrival of their king, together with the whole army,⁹² which was said to happen

33—34; 38—39; 45; Flor. I, 40, 27—31; Cass. Dio XXXVI, 53; XXXVII, 2, 6—7; 5—6; 14, 3—16, 4, as well as the literature quoted in footnote 38 and 40.

⁸⁴ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 2.

⁸⁵ Ibidem.

⁸⁶ Ibidem, 10, 2—3; P. Stein: *Die Senatssitzungen...*, pp. 55—58; R. Kamienik: "O senatus frequens...", p. 94; N. Rogosz: "Funkcjonowanie senatu...", p. 150.

⁸⁷ In the case of Cicero the indication of such attitude were for instance his constant efforts to return to Rome as soon as possible. Therefore, the great orator would not miss any opportunity to ask the politicians staying in the capital neither to extend his governing nor to increase his scope of duties (Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 11, 1; 15, 1; 17, 2; 18, 1; *Ad fam.* XV, 9, 2; II, 7, 4). Bibulus, however, tried to reach Syria, which he had been assigned to, as late as possible. As a result, he got there when the combats with the Parthians had ended, i.e. when they had withdrawn from the besieged Antioch (Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 16, 4; *Ad fam.* XV, 3, 2; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1; *Ad fam.* II, 10, 2).

⁸⁸ Especially Cicero expressed his great satisfaction because of this: Cic., *Ad fam.* III, 8, 10; II, 10, 2; 4.

⁸⁹ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 3; II, 10, 4.

⁹⁰ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 6, 4; 7, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2. Cf. also in this light: *Ad fam.* II, 10, 2; XV, 4, 7.

⁹¹ Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2. See also: *Ad fam.* II, 10, 2; XV, 4, 7.

⁹² A more thorough disquisition of Cicero, related to this matter see: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2.

in the spring of the following year. The Roman politicians also thought so and, thus, seriously took into account another attack of the powerful Parthian forces.⁹³

As a result, the idea to send Pompeius along with additional legions to the East in order to defy the invaders effectively was becoming more and more popular.⁹⁴ Particularly the governors of the most endangered provinces counted on this and, as the rumours about Pompeius's arrival were spreading, they begun to feel more and more secure.⁹⁵ However, on the other hand, they were afraid that the senate would be indecisive, while they were of the opinion that it should take a binding decision in this matter rather quickly. Meanwhile, the news coming from Italy did not include any information about the awaited resolution,⁹⁶ so Cicero supposed that presumably it was caused by C. Cassius's overoptimistic reports. Yet, he hoped that Bibulus's tremulous letters, which were written a little bit later, would stir the senate from its lethargy and cause a change in the senators' attitude concerning this issue.⁹⁷ Finally, the hopes and calculations of Cicero were confirmed by Pompeius himself, when he informed that he will be commissioned the command of further struggles with the Parthians.⁹⁸ This message was of immense significance, because the information got from different sources confirmed that when the right moment came, there would be a great war in Syria.⁹⁹

Presumably, influenced by such news in the spring of the year 50 in Rome, a constructive decision was taken to send two legions to Syria. Pompeius and Caesar were to separate legions from the composition of their armies, one each.¹⁰⁰

⁹³ Cicero included the news on which such speculations were based in the letter written to his close friend, T. Pomponius Atticus, which was referred to in the preceding footnote.

⁹⁴ Information on this subject see: Cic., *Ad Att.* VI, 1, 3.

⁹⁵ These rumours had been intensifying for a few months, due to the fact that the idea of entrusting Pompeius with the leadership in the expected war against Parthia appeared quite early among the senators. See in this context: Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 5, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 18, 1; *Ad fam.* VIII, 10, 2; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 3; VI, 1, 3; 14.

⁹⁶ Cf. in this light: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 21, 3; VI, 1, 14.

⁹⁷ The great orator assessed negatively C. Cassius Longinus's reports sent to Rome, which discussed the results of the fights with the Parthians in Syria in the year 51. First of all, he thought that the proquaestor presented them in a light which was overoptimistic and too favourable for the Romans, which meant also himself. Cf.: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2; VI, 1, 14.

⁹⁸ Cic., *Ad Att.* VI, 1, 14; M. Gelzer: *Pompeius...*, pp. 203, 205—206; R. Seager: *Pompey...*, p. 154.

⁹⁹ The news confirming this reached the Roman politicians, and especially the governors of eastern provinces, as for example M. Tullius Cicero, from various sources and for a longer period of time. About this issue see: Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 10, 4; XV, 4, 5; VIII, 7, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2; VI, 1, 3; 14; *Ad fam.* XIII, 57, 1; *Ad Att.* VI, 2, 6; 3, 2; 4, 1; 5, 3; M. Grzesiowski: "Partowie zagrażają...", pp. 288—295. Their inflow only ceased in July 50: Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1; *Ad Att.* VII, 1, 2. See also the literature quoted in footnote 12.

¹⁰⁰ Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 17, 5; VIII, 14, 4; Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 52, 3; 54, 1; Caes., *Bell. civ.* I, 32, 6; App., *B.C.* II, 29, 114; Cass. Dio XL, 65, 2; 66, 1; P. Stein: *Die Senatssitzungen...*, p. 59; N. Rogosz: "Geneza wojny domowej lat 49—48 p.n.e. a jej ujęcie w relacji Aulusa

This meant serious reinforcement of the forces in the East, since these were not supposed to be newly formed troops, but forces experienced in battles and with numerous victorious military campaigns on their scorecard.¹⁰¹ Cn. Pompeius, wanting to retain his army not depleted and to weaken Caesar at the same time, decided to enter a legion which he had lent to Caesar before. As a result, Caesar had to separate two legions from the composition of his army. In spite of this, suitably to the senate's resolution and Pompeius's demand, he sent one legion of his to the war against Parthia and he returned the other one to Pompeius.¹⁰² Thus, soon both of them arrived from Gaul to Italy and started the preparations to go to the East, from which there were still alarming news coming.¹⁰³

Another important matter was to appoint new governors for the eastern provinces, because the current administrators were entrusted with these posts only for one year.¹⁰⁴ However, the senate procrastinated.¹⁰⁵ It is possible that

Hirejusza." W: *Historia i Współczesność*, t. 6: *Z zagadnień historiografii od czasów antyku do XVI wieku*. Red. A. Kunisz. Katowice 1982, pp. 22, 24—25; Idem: "Stanowisko senatu wobec konfliktu Pompejusza z Cezarem (1 marca — 1 grudnia 50 r. p.n.e.)." *AUMCS*, Sect. F, 1994, vol. 49, p. 58.

¹⁰¹ This opinion is justified and correct, since Caesar and Pompeius had had their armies at their disposal for many years. What is more, their soldiers continuously took part in military action, however the legionist of Pompeius on a smaller scale. Thus, they can be acknowledged as old comrades, experienced in war and knowing their trade inside out. Eventually both legions were separated from Caesar's army, as a result of Pompeius's demands (this question is discussed more thoroughly hereinunder). For this reason their military value was all the bigger, because these soldiers had participated in many difficult military campaigns organized by Caesar during his invasion of Gaul. On the topic of the fights with the Gaulish tribes and with the Germans, as well as their scale see: Caes., *Bell. Gall.* I—VII; Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 1—49; Suet., *Iul.* 25; Plut., *Caes.* 15; 18—27; App., *B.C.* II, 17, 61; Flor. I, 45; Cass. Dio XXXVIII, 31—50; XXXIX, 1—5; 40—53; XL, 1—11; 31—44; M. Gelzer: *Caesar. Der Politiker und Staatsmann*. Wiesbaden 1960, pp. 92—179; J. Carcopino: *Jules César*. Paris 1968, pp. 223—253, 281—285, 300—333.

¹⁰² Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 52, 3; 54, 1—3; Caes., *Bell. civ.* I, 2, 3; 3, 2; 4, 4; 9, 4; 32, 6; Plut., *Caes.* 29, 2; *Pomp.* 56, 3; App., *B.C.* II, 29, 115; Cass. Dio XL, 65, 3; N. Rogosz: "Geneza...", pp. 24—25; Idem: "Stanowisko senatu... (1 marca — 1 grudnia 50 r. p.n.e.)...", p. 58.

¹⁰³ Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 54, 3; Caes., *Bell. civ.* I, 2, 3; 3, 2; Plut., *Caes.* 29, 3—4; App., *B.C.* II, 29, 115; Cass. Dio XL, 65, 3—4; N. Rogosz: "Geneza...", p. 25.

¹⁰⁴ With reference to his governing, Cicero mentioned one year term on this post very often, but in various contexts. (*Ad Att.* V, 15, 1; *Ad fam.* XV, 2, 1; 4, 2; *Ad Att.* VI, 2, 6; 3, 1; 5, 3; VII, 3, 1. Cf. also: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 11, 1; 17, 5; 18, 1; 3; *Ad fam.* XV, 9, 2; II, 7, 4; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2; VI, 1, 14; *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1; 15, 5). The same time of office concerned also other governors of the province, because they all were assigned the posts on the same principles. See the text on p. 52 and the footnotes 54—55.

¹⁰⁵ The fact that the senate delayed making a decision on this issue caused great discontent, complaints and grumbling of Cicero, who ruled Cilicia at that time: Cic., *Ad Att.* V, 21, 3; VI, 1, 14; 3, 1; *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1. Cf. also: *Ad fam.* II, 15, 4. Similarly, probably the other administrators of the eastern provinces were also dissatisfied with the senate's work and attitude, in particular M. Calpurnius Bibulus, who administered Syria, endangered by the Parthians. Caesar informs

for the time of the expected fights the senate planned to bring these provinces under Pompeius's control. If this was really the case, there was no need to deal with this matter, the more that the new administrators, and their ambitions, could complicate the situation in the east by hindering Pompeius to lead the war against Parthians. Still, since everybody wanted to leave this region as soon as possible, particularly before the expected outbreak of fights,¹⁰⁶ the senate's ambiguous policy, and especially lack of decision on this matter bred anxiety, fear and various speculations among the governors of the eastern provinces, whose terms were expiring.

The not very uplifting attitude of those governors caused anarchy in their provinces, which was intensifying with time.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Bibulus, who was ruling Syria, was plunged into pain and mourning after his two sons had been murdered in Alexandria, so he did not quite care about the situation in his province.¹⁰⁸ Cicero, on the other hand, pondered over the approaching end of his mission in Cilicia and his departure for Rome. Therefore, he devoted a lot of time to the choice of a person who could temporarily be entrusted with the activities related to the governing of the province after he would have left.¹⁰⁹ Of course, he also dealt with the expected combats with the Parthians, but this was rather a formality for him, as he spent less and less time on the preparations for the war.¹¹⁰

In July 50 the situation suddenly changed due to the fact that the Parthians unexpectedly withdrew behind Euphrates,¹¹¹ so the threat of the war was not real anymore. The Roman authorities already before this situation could not decide to pass the resolution ordering to send the two mentioned legions to the east, so afterwards it was almost certain that these legions would never reach these provinces.¹¹² What is more, the Roman politicians in the capital stopped

about the appointing of their successors in January 49 and the circumstances which accompanied this event.: *Bell. civ.* I, 6, 5.

¹⁰⁶ On the subject of the attitude of the then governors of the eastern provinces, and particularly Cicero's, before the expected Parthian attack, see: Cic., *Ad fam.* XV, 4, 5; VIII, 6, 4; 7, 1; *Ad Att.* V, 21, 2—3; VI, 1, 14; *Ad fam.* XIII, 57, 1; *Ad Att.* VI, 2, 6; 3, 1—2; 4, 1; 5, 3; *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1; *Ad Att.* VI, 6, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Cicero mentions this with discontent: *Ad Att.* VI, 4, 1; 5, 3.

¹⁰⁸ Cic., *Ad Att.* VI, 5, 3; Caes., *Bell. civ.* III, 110, 6; Val. Max. IV, 1, 15. More on this subject see: W. Drumann, P. Groebe: *Geschichte Roms...*, vol. 2, p. 87; R. Syme: *M. Bibulus...*, p. 190; M.J.G. Grey-Fow: *The Mental Breakdown...*, 179; I. Hofmann-Löbl: *Die Calpurnii...*, p. 192.

¹⁰⁹ Cic., *Ad Att.* VI, 2, 6; 3, 1—2; 4, 1; *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1; 15, 4; *Ad Att.* VI, 6, 3. Cf. also: VII, 3, 5.

¹¹⁰ Cic., *Ad Att.* VI, 1, 3; 3, 2; 4, 1; *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1; 3.

¹¹¹ Many ancient authors inform about this: Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 17, 1; 3; 5; *Ad Att.* VI, 6, 3; 8, 5; VII, 1, 2; Cass. Dio XL, 29, 3. Cf. also source texts and the literature quoted in footnote 12.

¹¹² Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 17, 5; Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 55, 1; Caes., *Bell. civ.* I, 2, 3; 4, 4; 9, 4; App., B.C. II, 29, 115; Cass. Dio XL, 66, 1; N. Rogosz: "Geneza...", pp. 25—26; Idem:

occupying themselves with the Parthians, as their attention was drawn to other problems, among others the matter of rewarding the governors who participated in the combats with the Parthians in the past years and assessing them as far as the effects of the actions they were conducting at that time were concerned.¹¹³ However, all these matters were overshadowed by Pompeius's and Caesar's conflict and the civil war, which was, thus, approaching rapidly.¹¹⁴

As it results from this discussion, the Roman authorities, in particular the consuls, and other senate's members as well as Cn. Pompeius, who was the dominating figure in Rome at that time, did not counteract the Parthian threat in the years 53—50 in a way that the Republic's interests would require, in spite of the fact that they did appreciate the importance of the eastern provinces. The administrators of these provinces, especially of Syria and Cilicia, had similar attitude. This surprising passivity of the Roman authorities and politicians was certainly not caused by their lack of interest in the fate of the eastern provinces, but by various complications of internal nature, which the then policy-makers considered much more important than the threats in the east. The later fate of the Republic order and maintaining the power by the elite that was governing the Republic at that time depended on the way these complications would be solved.

However, it must be noticed that the Roman politicians terribly neglected public issues at that time. They cared about their own interests, benefits, careers and accolades in the first place, and the matters of the country were a side issue. At times they treated the duties they had been entrusted with as the necessary evil and they acted differently only when they could draw suitable profits from them.

In spite of all this, in the years 53—50 the Roman dominions in the east and their local allies were not brought under the control of the powerful neighbour, the Parthian kingdom. Yet, this was rather the effect of a happy coincidence than of the Roman preventive actions. This coincidence was caused by the complicated internal situation in the Parthian kingdom, which resulted in the lack

"Stanowisko senatu wobec rywalizacji Pompejusza z Cezarem (1 XII 50 r.—11 I 49 r. p.n.e.)." W: *Rzym antyczny. Polityka i pieniądz*, II. Red. A. Kunisz. Katowice 1997, p. 16.

¹¹³ Cf. in this light: Cic., *Ad fam.* II, 17, 6; 7; *Ad Att.* VI, 8, 5; VII, 2, 6; 3, 5; M. Grzesiowski: "Wojskowa kampania Cyncerona...", pp. 155—166; R. Kamienik: "Zabiegi Cyncerona o triumf i ich niepowodzenie." W: *Antiquitas*, t. 14. Red. A. Ładomirski, Wrocław 1988, pp. 89—95; E. Dulski: "Cynceron...", pp. 32—34.

¹¹⁴ Cic., *Ad fam.* VIII, 14, 4. More on this topic: Hirt., *Bell. Gall.* VIII, 50—52; 54—55; Caes., *Bell. civ.* I, 1—7; Vell. Pat. II, 48—49; Suet., Iul. 28—30; Plut., *Caes.* 29—31; Pomp. 57—59; *Cat. Min.* 51, 4—5; App., *B.C.* II, 25—34; Flor., II, 13, 8—17; Cass. Dio XI, 44, 58—66; XLI, 1—3; N. Rogosz: "Geneza...", pp. 7—30; Idem: "Stanowisko senatu...(1 marca — 1 grudnia 50 r. p.n.e.)...", pp. 58—68; Idem: "Debata senatu z 1 grudnia 50 r. przed narodzeniem Chrystusa w świetle konfliktu Pompejusza z Cezarem." *Wiekі stare i nowe*, t. 2. Red. I. Panicz, M.W. Wanatowicz. Katowice 2001, pp. 19—42; Idem: "Stanowisko senatu...(1 XII 50 r. — 11 I 49 r. p.n.e.)...", pp. 9—37, further literature to be found there.

of freedom in the foreign policy carried out by its ruler. Since he only could attack the Romans and their local allies with a part of his forces, he could not have taken control over the areas he was interested in and gain the dominating position in that region for Parthia.

Norbert Rogosz

REPUBLIKA RZYMSKA A ZAGROŻENIE WSCHODNICH PROWINCJI PRZEZ PARTÓW W LATACH 53—50 PRZED CHR.

Streszczenie

Kłęska M. Licyniusza Krassusa pod Carrhae w 53 r. przed Chr. doprowadziła do wytworzenia się na wschodnim pograniczu Imperium Romanum bardzo niebezpiecznej dla Rzymian sytuacji, gdyż nie posiadali oni już w tym rejonie sił potrafiących przeciwstawić się zwycięskim Partom i obronić leżących tam prowincji. Ponieważ rzymskie państwo nadal znajdowało się z nimi w stanie wojny, należało się spodziewać, że ich władca zechce wykorzystać trudne położenie już pokonanych przeciwników, zaatakuje owe posiadłości i włączy je do własnego królestwa.

Przedmiotem niniejszego artykułu jest prześledzenie polityki rzymskich władz wobec zagrożenia, które dla wschodnich prowincji stanowili Partowie, oraz jego podłoża. W początkowych partiach tekstu omawiana jest sytuacja wytworzona na Wschodzie po klęsce Krassusa oraz jej konsekwencje. Następnie analizowane są poczynania Rzymian wobec partyjskiego zagrożenia w latach 53—50. Dążąc do ich dogłębnego wyjaśnienia, autor rozważa także sytuację panującą w Rzymie w latach 53—52, akcentując ówczesne konflikty polityczne znacząco ograniczające zdolności Republiki do zajmowania się sprawami Wschodu. Szczególną uwagę poświęcono również wiążącym się z nimi działaniom Gn. Pompejusza w czasie jego trzeciego konsulatu, a także wyznaczeniu wschodnim prowincjom nowych namiestników, zwłaszcza Syrii i Cylicji najbardziej zagrożonym przez Partów oraz polityce konsulów i senatu wobec tej sprawy w latach 51—50.

Autor prezentuje także postawy zarządców wspomnianych prowincji, ich plany i zamierzenia, działalność w czasie pobytu na Wschodzie, szczególnie inicjatywy zmierzające do obrony powierzonych im obszarów przed atakami Partów, w tym dążenia do wzmocnienia stacjonujących tam wojsk. Ponadto współpracę owych namiestników, ich poczucie obowiązku oraz sposoby postrzegania i wypełniania przez nich powierzonych im zadań. Większość tych ostatnich kwestii przedstawiona jest w odniesieniu do Cylicji, ponieważ o poczynaniach jej ówczesnego zarządcy M. Tulliusza Cicerona zachowało się najwięcej informacji, które na dodatek wywodzą się z jego tekstów.

Norbert Rogosz

LA RÉPUBLIQUE ROMAINE ET LA MENACE DES PROVINCES ORIENTALES
PAR LES PARTHES DANS LES ANNÉES 53—50 AV. J.-C.

Résumé

La défaite de M. Licinius Crassus à la bataille de Carrhae en 53 av. J.-C. a mené à la création sur la frontière est d'Imperium Romanum une situation très dangereuse pour les Romains, parce qu'ils n'avaient pas dans cette région une armée capable d'affronter des Parthes victorieux et défendre ces provinces. Puisque l'Empire romain se trouvait en état de guerre avec eux, on pouvait attendre que leur souverain veuille bénéficier de la position difficile des adversaires déjà vaincus, et attaquerait ces territoires pour les joindre à son royaume.

L'objectif de cet article est d'analyser la politique des autorités romaines envers la menace que, pour les provinces occidentales, représentaient les Parthes, et de son origine. Dans la première partie du texte, l'auteur présente la situation créée à l'Orient après la défaite de Crassus, ainsi que ses conséquences. Ensuite il analyse les actes des Romains envers la menace des Parthes dans les années 53—50. Pour les expliquer de manière la plus minutieuse, l'auteur esquisse également la situation à Rome dans les années 53—52, en accentuant des conflits politiques contemporains, limitant considérablement les capacités de la République de s'occuper des affaires de l'Orient. Une attention particulière est portée sur les démarches de Pompée le Grand pendant son troisième consulat, et sur la désignation des préfets nouveaux dans des provinces occidentales, surtout en Syrie et en Cilicie, les plus menacées par les Parthes, ainsi que sur la politique des consuls et du Sénat, concernant cette affaire dans les années 51—50. L'auteur présente les attitudes des consuls mentionnés, leurs projets et plans, leur activité pendant le séjour à l'Orient, surtout des initiatives de défense des provinces contre les attaques des Parthes, y compris des plans de renforcer l'armée y stationnant. Il esquisse également la coopération de ces gouverneurs, leur sens du devoir et les manières de percevoir et d'exercer des tâches qui leur étaient confiées. La plupart de ces questions sont présentées par rapport à la Cilicie, car la majorité d'informations préservées concerne le proconsul Marcus Tullius Cicero, en plus provenant de ses propres écrits.